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- Title** **FBI Cracks Down on Illegal Phone Devices**
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- Abstract** FBI arrests 18 people nationwide for use of blue boxes; suspects were using equipment for gambling or personal business.
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FBI Cracks Down on Illegal Phone Devices

10 Southlanders Among 18 Across Nation Accused of Using Electronic Cheaters

Eighteen persons throughout the nation, including 10 Southern Californians, were arrested Wednesday by the FBI on charges of using electronic "blue boxes" to avoid paying for long distance telephone calls.

Some of those arrested in the nine-state crack-down were charged with using the phone device for the illegal transmission of wagering information. Others were said to have used the equipment for private business.

Investigations Continue

A key suspect, Gilbert Lee Beckley, 53, of Bay Harbor Islands, Fla., was described by the FBI as "one of the major bookmakers in the United States." He was apprehended in New York.

Arnold C. Larson, assistant special agent in charge of the FBI here, said investigations are continuing into the extent of the gambling activities and the source of the electronic "blue boxes."

Most of the Southern California suspects were arrested at their homes. They included Gerald Hay Kilgore, 30, identified as publisher of the JK Sports Journal of Los Angeles, and Alvin Kenneth Bubis, 34, a self-employed music publisher and film promoter.

Kilgore, of 7517 Zelzah Ave., Reseda, was charged with interstate transmission of wagering information, which carries a maximum penalty of two years imprisonment and a \$10,000 fine.

Bubis, of 8401 Sunset

Blvd., was arraigned on this charge and on a charge of fraud by wire.

The other Southland men were all charged with violating the fraud-by-wire laws, which carries a maximum sentence of five years in prison and \$1,000 fine.

They are: Harold (Buz) Mahan, 47, president of Aero Methods Engineering Corp. of Los Angeles. He resides at 9405 Sierra Mar Place, Beverly Hills. Gray Hoffman, 40, of 212 S. Mariposa St., Burbank, manager of the Kahr Bearing Corp. of Burbank.

Joseph Soldis, 36, of 4812 Sharynne Lane, Torrance, a salesman.

Carl Lovelace Clement, 55, of 9336 Lemona Ave., Sepulveda, engineering manager of the Escoa Corp. of Gardena, where Soldis works as a salesman.

Robert Pelletier, 41, also known as Arthur Blake, a

self-employed engineer of 804 A Esplanade, Redondo Beach.

Wallace David Kies, 28, of Riverside, acting supervisor of a steam plant at UC Riverside.

Larry L. Simms, 31, of 4455 Rising Hill Road, Altadena, an electronics engineer at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena.

Dr. Milton M. Birnbaum, a physician with offices at 1237 N. La Brea Ave., who surrendered to the FBI.

No pleas were entered by any of the suspects pending consultation with their attorneys.

Larson said the "blue box" device — technically known as a multi-frequency signal generator — cuts out the telephone company when a long distance call is placed in a manner similar to what happens when a long distance caller gets a busy signal or no answer.